

MD Smart Energy Communities



Maryland Energy
ADMINISTRATION
Powering Maryland's Future

Program Overview: To be designated as a Smart Energy Community, a Maryland local government must adopt a set of policies specified by the Maryland Energy Administration. There are three potential policies - one each related to energy efficiency, renewable energy, and transportation petroleum reduction - and becoming a Smart Energy Community requires adopting two of the three policies. Once the policies are adopted, the local government becomes eligible for grant funding for energy-related projects.

Eligibility: Any Maryland local government (city, town, or county) can become a Maryland Smart Energy Community.

Goals: The overall goal of the program is to have local governments adopt policies and commit to them for the long term, leading to sustained energy savings and additional opportunities for renewable energy development.

MEA will provide technical assistance and support to the local governments as they adopt the policies. The University of Maryland Environmental Finance Center will also be available for technical guidance and support.

Incentives and Benefits of Participating:

Upon adopting the policies, local governments become eligible for grant funding from MEA to be used for energy-related projects. Becoming a Smart Energy Community will result in:

- Reduced utility and fuel expenses
- Support of local sustainability initiatives
- Greenhouse gas emissions reduction
- Statewide recognition as a leader in energy and sustainability
- Technical assistance from the University of Maryland Environmental Finance Center



Project Requirements:

Local governments must adopt two of the three of the following policies:

1. Energy Efficiency

- Establish an energy consumption baseline and develop a plan with the goal of reducing energy consumption of city/town or county-owned buildings by 15% within five (5) years of the baseline year.

2. Renewable Energy

- Reduce conventional centralized electricity generation serving a local government's buildings by meeting 20% of those buildings' electricity demand with distributed, renewable energy generation by 2022.

3. Transportation Petroleum Reduction

- A local government must establish a petroleum consumption baseline for all local government vehicles, and put in place a comprehensive plan designed to reduce the baseline by 20 percent within five (5) years of the baseline.

How To Apply: To be designated a Smart Energy Community applicants must follow a sequence of steps.

1. Review the policy guidance documents for each of the energy focus areas to ensure that you fully understand program eligibility and requirements. Guidance documents are available online at: <http://energy.maryland.gov/Govt/smartenergycommunities/>.

2. Application:

The local government will apply to be designated as a Maryland Smart Energy Community and to receive grant funding. The next application period will be in late 2014. The application for new communities can be found online at the MSEC website.

For Additional Information

Go to:

<http://energy.maryland.gov/Govt/smartenergycommunities/>

Or email Lauren Urbanek at
LUrbanek@maryland.gov

3. MEA Application Review:

MEA will evaluate applications based on multiple criteria including the local government's capacity to pass policies within the given timeframe, ability to commit staff to the initiative, application completeness, and other factors. *If a local government is accepted into the program, they become eligible for grant funding for specific energy-related projects in subsequent years.*

4. Implementation Agreements

Once applications are approved, each participating local government will sign implementation agreements with MEA in the winter. The agreement will state that the local government will pass two of the three policies and complete related energy planning work by October 31 of the same year (within 8 months), and upon doing so will be eligible for a set amount of funding for an energy efficiency, renewable energy and/or transportation project, to be approved by MEA. Model policies are available and MEA's technical support provider, the University of Maryland's Environmental Finance Center, will assist communities with program requirements.

5. Policies Adopted (By Oct. 31)

Local governments must adopt the two policies and create matching baselines and plans by October 31 of the same year as the grant agreement. A portion of the grant funding may be accessed prior to October 31 to assist with policy development and administrative costs. If communities do not pass the policies by this date, they will not receive their full grant funding to complete energy projects.

6. Funding for Energy-Related Project (Oct - May)

Once a local government passes the policies, they become designated as a Maryland Smart Energy Community and can access the full project funding. All projects must be related to energy efficiency, renewable energy, and/or transportation and must be approved by MEA. A separate project proposal form will be available to local governments upon being accepted into the program. Projects are subject to MEA's terms and conditions. Projects must be complete and invoiced by May of the year following the initial grant agreement.